

Jamaat trying to fish in troubled waters: Rizvi

UNB, Dhaka
BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday alleged that Jamaat-e-Islami is trying to fish in troubled waters.

"Some people are now trying to fish in troubled waters and saying there is no proper environment for the election," he said while inaugurating a football tournament at the Dhanmondi Sports Club ground.

He also alleged that Jamaat, which had taken part in the 1986 election under an autocratic regime, is now questioning the electoral atmosphere under the interim government.

BNP's Dhaka North City unit organised the event as part of the party's month-long programme to mark the first anniversary of the July mass uprising.

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Pillars of the Metro Rail being painted with slogans denouncing the 15-year rule of Awami League. The photo was taken in the capital's Karwan Bazar area yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

HOLY ASHURA Yunus calls for 'equality, justice, peace' in society

UNB, Dhaka

Highlighting the significance of the holy Ashura, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus has laid emphasis on establishing "equality, justice and peace" in society and wished for the "unity, solidarity and continuous progress" of the Muslim Ummah.



In his message on the occasion of the holy Ashura, Yunus said this sacrifice of the brave soldiers of Islam, standing against the injustice and injustice of the oppressor, will remain forever in the history of the world.

He said it will continue to inspire humanity with the strength and courage to uphold truth and justice in the face of oppression and injustice.

The holy Ashura, commemorating the martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA), is being observed in the country today with due religious fervour and solemnity. The day is a public holiday.

Ashura, the 10th of Muharram in the Islamic calendar, commemorates the date in the Hijri year of 61, when Hazrat Imam, the grandson of Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH), along with his family members and 72 followers embraced the martyrdom in the hands of Yazid's soldiers at the desert of Karbala to uphold the teachings of the Prophet (SM).

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ROHINGYA CRISIS Bangladesh renews call for global action

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has reiterated its call for urgent international action to resolve the prolonged Rohingya crisis, as the UN Human Rights Council adopted a resolution addressing the situation in Myanmar's Rakhine State.

The resolution, adopted by consensus at the 59th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva on Friday, called for an end to the culture of impunity in Rakhine and stressed the need for inclusive governance there and meaningful representation of Rohingya Muslims in decision-making.

Arakan Army, the rebel group seeking autonomy in Rakhine, now controls around 90 percent of the state following nearly two years of fighting against the Myanmar junta.

Around 750,000 Rohingyas fled to Bangladesh during the 2017 military crackdown, placing a heavy burden on the host country. The situation has worsened with declining humanitarian aid.

Since November 2023, another 180,000 Rohingyas have crossed into Bangladesh to escape violence in Rakhine.

The OIC-led resolution expressed deep concern over the shrinking aid and stressed the need for equitable burden-sharing by the international community to support the over one million Rohingyas currently sheltering in Bangladesh.

Titled "The Situation of Human Rights of the Rohingya Muslims and Other Minorities in Myanmar", the resolution also called for unhindered humanitarian access in Rakhine by the UN and relevant humanitarian actors.

Ambassador Tareq Md Ariful Islam, permanent representative of Bangladesh in Geneva, voiced concern over continued violence by Myanmar's military and armed groups like the Arakan Army, which he said are blocking aid and worsening the Rohingya crisis.

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Weight chart for prison staffers

New initiative aims to improve discipline, fitness

RAFIUL ISLAM

The Prisons Directorate has introduced a standard weight chart for all officers and employees.

Launched for the first time, the initiative aims to foster a more disciplined, smart, and health-conscious prison force through exercise and dietary regulation, prisons officials said.

On April 24, Brig Gen Syed Mohammad Motaheer Hossain, inspector general of prisons, issued a directive to all prison units and relevant offices instructing them to follow the newly adopted guidelines for staffer's weight.

"A staffer maintaining weight according to the chart will gain an advantage in departmental promotions or promotion exams, with at least 5 marks potentially allocated for meeting the criteria."

"The weight chart has now been introduced for the first time to make the prison force smarter and fitter," said Jannat-Ul-Farhad, assistant inspector general (development) at Prisons Headquarters.

"This has already been implemented, and the officials concerned have been instructed to assess and record measurements twice a year, in June and December," added Farhad, who also serves as spokesperson for the Prisons Directorate.

The move came months after around 2,200 prisoners escaped

from jails across the country during the mass uprising in July-August last year. Around 700 of them are still at large.

Several prison officials said many guards were unable to play an effective role in preventing jailbreaks. Apart from other issues, their lack of physical fitness hindered timely action then.

Prisons officials said this also influenced the implementation of

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JANNAT-UL-FARHAD
Assistant inspector general (dev)
at Prisons Headquarters

the standard weight chart for its staffers. The weight chart categorises personnel according to age and height, setting clear minimum and maximum weight limits.

According to the chart, the minimum weight for a male employee, with a minimum height of approximately 5 feet, is set at 47 kilogrammes. The maximum allowable weight is 95kg for males

who are 6 feet 1 inch tall and aged 51 or above.

Similarly, for female staff, the minimum weight for those standing 5 feet tall is set at 44kg, while the maximum is 76kg.

Staffers who fall outside the standard weight range may be referred for medical evaluation and corrective measures, according to prison officials.

Exemptions will be considered for certain medical conditions.

All unit chiefs have been ordered to submit compliance reports, while the Prisons Directorate will oversee implementation through periodic follow-up assessments.

"Those who are overweight usually avoid exercise and, in some cases, even skip the daily parade," said an official of Kashimpur Central Jail.

"But now, they've started participating in physical activities. It's a significant change. I believe this initiative will transform both the mindset and appearance of prison officials and staff, bringing them more in line with other disciplined forces," he said.

Shameem Iqbal, jail superintendent of Narsingdi District Jail, said, "It's a good initiative, as we are generally less conscious of our health."

"We've already started raising awareness among our staff. Those who are overweight are being given advice and guidance to help them get back in shape," he added.

Mob justice goes against spirit of July uprising Says attorney general

UNB, Dhaka

Attorney General Advocate Md Asaduzzaman yesterday said mob justice, in any form, is unacceptable and goes against the spirit of the July Uprising.

He warned that continuous acts of mob violence, like the recent assault on former CEC Nurul Huda, could jeopardise the country's democratic achievements, even if accountability for wrongdoing is necessary.

Speaking at the "Shadow Parliament" organised by Debate for Democracy at the Bangladesh Film Development Corporation (BFDC) in the capital, he said all political forces must also unite against fascism, as the public outrage witnessed over the past 17 years was born from injustices.

"No one convicted by the International Crimes Tribunal should be allowed to contest in elections. The tribunal also has jurisdiction over organisations complicit in crimes against humanity. Awami League represents a banned entity, and anyone associated -- directly or indirectly -- with it must be held accountable under the law," he said.

Referring to the previous regime, the attorney general alleged that members of the so-called civil society, including university teachers, lawyers and journalists, became subservient to authoritarian rule. They played a key role in turning Bangladesh into a fascist state, he alleged.

"Differences between political parties are not irreconcilable. Dialogue can resolve disagreements. But when it comes to fascism, there is no room for division -- we must be united," Asaduzzaman said.

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ROAD 103 IN GULSHAN

Commercial establishment in a residential zone

Experts slam Rajuk for approving high-rise mall without traffic assessment

HELEMUL ALAM

While Road 103 in the capital's Gulshan -- a designated residential area -- already struggles under tremendous traffic pressure, the establishment of a new shopping mall has further strained the situation.

Experts and commuters warn that the construction of commercial buildings in residential zones will only exacerbate congestion problems, eventually impacting the already-busy Gulshan Avenue.

Despite urban planning rules prohibiting such development, the Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) has approved a multi-storey commercial building beside Pink City Shopping Mall, altering the area's residential character.

Another building on nearby Road 102 was granted commercial status about 10 years ago, which experts say has contributed to worsening traffic congestion.

A recent visit to Road 103 revealed that a 13-storey building, Ventura Mall (Plot 14/A, Block CEN



(C), Road 103/95, Gulshan-2), has been constructed beside Pink City. A signboard outside reads, "Rajuk Approved - Shopping Mall - Ready Shops for Rent." One shop is already in operation.

Commuters and experts have raised concerns about the conversion of residential buildings to commercial use. Pink City, located at the beginning of Road 103, has long contributed to traffic pressure on the avenue and surrounding streets due to insufficient parking.



Contacted, Atiquzzaman, a sales official of Ventura Mall, confirmed that they received Rajuk's approval in 2019 after paying Tk 50 lakh per katha for land reclassification. The mall, built on 8.5 kathas of land, has three basements with space for 38 cars and 24 designated parking spots for 22 shops.

"The first three floors are designated for the mall, while the upper floors will be used for office spaces," he said.

Atiquzzaman also claimed they had made adequate parking arrangements and planned to deploy additional staff to manage traffic.

Md Abul Kayum, director of Chaya Developer Limited which constructed the Pink City, said the

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Dr. ATM Shamsul Huda

(10 July 1942 – 5 July 2025)

We are deeply saddened to inform the passing of Dr. ATM Shamsul Huda, Independent Director of Apex Tannery Limited and Former Chief Election Commissioner of Bangladesh.

Dr. Huda was a distinguished public servant and a respected leader whose contributions to the democratic process of Bangladesh and corporate governance will always be remembered with admiration and gratitude. His wisdom, integrity and dedication served as a guiding light to many.

From Apex family, we extend our heartfelt prayers and sympathy. May the Almighty grant him eternal peace and give strength to his loved ones during this difficult time.

